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Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

66610
DRAFTED BY: EUR/WE:REBARBOUR:VE
APPROVED BY: EUR/WE:REBARBOUR
EUR/IB:AWLUKENS
S/S-O:MTANNER
---------- 056021
R 252316Z APR 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 093817

EXDIS - PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADOR OR CHARGE

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 093817 ACTION LONDON NATO 23 APR

QUOTE

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EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT MADRID 2725 SENT SECSTATE DATED APR 21.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 2725

EXDIS

FOR AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR SP US
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SUBJECT: US-SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS--CONVERSATION WITH

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UNDER SECRETARY ROVIRA

REF MADRID 2660

1. AT LUNCH WITH ME ON APR 21, UNDER SECRETARY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS ROVIRA SAID THAT HE SAW NO PROBLEM WITH
POSTPONING THE NEXT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS UNTIL AFTER
THE NATO MEETING IN BRUSSELS. HE BELIEVED LITTLE OR NO
PURPOSE WOULD BE SERVED BY MEETING IN MAY AND HE FORESAW
NO DIFFICULTY IN HANDLING ANY PRESS INQUIRIES CONCERNING
THE LACK OF A MAY SESSION. WHEN I MENTIONED TO HIM THAT
I HAD DETECTED SOME UNHAPPINESS WITHIN THE GOVT
ABOUT THE SLOW PACE OF NEGOTIATIONS (ALTHOUGH I DID NOT
TELL HIM WHO IT WAS, THE PRESIDENT OF THE GOVT HAD
THIS MORNING EXPRESSED CONERN ON THE SLOW TEMPO),
ROVIRA SAID HE WAS CERTAIN THAT CORTINA HAD THE CONFI-
DENCE OF FRANCO AND ARIAS IN HANDLING THE NEGOTIATIONS
AND WAS NOT PRESSURING HIM TO SPEED MATTERS UP.

2. ROVIRA MADE THE POINT THAT THE SPANISH GOVT
FULLY RECOGNIZED THAT IT WOULD TAKE TIME TO PREPARE THE
GROUND FOR SOME FORM OF SPANISH LINK WITH NATO. THE
GOVT FULLY UNDERSTOOD ALL THE PROBLEMS AND REALIZED
THAT IT WAS DOUBTFUL THAT MUCH COULD BE ACHIEVED AT THE
MAY NATO SUMMIT. THE GOS WAS HOPEFUL, OF COURSE, THAT
SOME PROGRESS COULD BE REGISTERED, BUT IT ENTERTAINED NO
PARTICULAR ILLUSIONS. SINCE THE GOS WAS ITSELF PERSUADED
OF THE NEED FOR TIME, HE SAID IT WAS THE GOVT'S
POSITION THAT IF IT WAS NECESSARY, AND THIS SEEMED LIKELY,
THE AGREEMENT SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO THE END OF THE YEAR.
IN RESPONSE TO MY SPECIFIC QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE GOS
MIGHT EXPDCT
QUID FOR THIS EXTENSION, ROVIRA SAID NO AND
GAVE ME TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WAS A GOVT POSITION.

3. ROVIRA ADMITTED THAT THE POSITION WHICH HE HAD GIVEN
AT THE LAST FRIDAY SESSION OF THE 5TH ROUND, THAT IS,
EITHER A NATO LINK OR A SHARP CUTBACK TO ONLY US-RELATED
FACILITIES, WAS NOT A PRACTICAL ONE SINCE IT WOULD BE
VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN US-RELATED
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FACILITIES AND NATO-RELATED FACILITIES. HOWEVER, MILITARY
HAD BELIEVED IT NECESSARY TO STATE THIS POSITION AND THERE
WERE CERTAIN PLACES WHERD OME CUTBACK COULD TAKE PLACE.
SPECIFICALLY, HE MENTIONED THE BARDENAS REALES RANGE WHICH
HE UNDERSTOOD US-NATO COMMITTED UNITS IN GERMANY AND THE UK WERE
USING EXTENSIVELY. I POINTED OUT TO ROVIRA THAT THERE WAS
REALLY VERY LITTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE AND OTHER US
UNITS STATIONED IN SPAIN WHICH WERE NATO-COMMITTED.

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ROVIRA ADMITTED THIS AND SAID THAT, AS WE WOULD RECALL,
THIS WHOLE QUESTION WAS NEGOTIABLE.

4. WITH REGARD TO SPANISH ACTIVITY WITH OTHER NATO COUNTRIES, ROVIRA SAID THAT SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, SPANISH EMBASSIES IN NATOCAPITALS HAD BEEN ASKED TO GIVE THEIR OWN ASSESSMENTS (WITHOUT APPROACHING GOVTS) OF ATTITUDES TOWARD SPANISH LINKS WITH NATO. MOST OF THE REPLIES HAD INDICATED THAT THERE WAS LITTLE PROSPECT FOR EARLY PROGRESS. IT WAS NOW PLANNED THAT WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK OR TEN DAYS CORTINA WOULD BEGIN A SERIES OF DEMARCHE TO AMBASSADORS OF NATO COUNTRIES IN MADRID WITH A VIEW TO PREPARING THE GROUND GRADUALLY FOR GREATER RECEPTIVITY TO SOME FORM OF LINK WITH SPAIN. DEPENDING ON THE OUTCOME OF THOSE DEMARCHE, THE GOS MIGHT THEN SEND A MISSION TO CERTAIN NATO CAPITALS.

5. IN THIS REGARD, ROVIRA REFERRED TO THE POSSIBILITY OF A TRIP BY POLITICAL DIRECTOR GENERAL DE LOS ARCOS AND EUROPEAN DIRECTOR GENERAL AGUIRRE DE CARCER (REFTEL) TO LONDON ON MAY 6 FOR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE BRITISH. ROVIRA SAID HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT THAT THIS WAS PREMATURE SINCE HE DID NOT WANT TO PROVOKE A SPECIFICALLY NEGATIVE UK REACTION PRIOR TO THE MAY NATO MEETING. HE WAS RECOMMENDING STRONGLY AGAINST THE TRIP TO CORTINA AND HE PROMISED TO LET ME KNOW THE DECISION. I TOLD ROVIRA THAT IT WAS MY IMPRESSION THAT THE BRITISH ATTITUDE AT THIS TIME WAS A RATHER NEGATIVE ONE. I TOLD HIM THAT I WOULD INQUIRE OF THE DEPT WHETHER THE DEPT FELT A SPANISH APPROACH TO THE UK WOULD BE USEFUL AT THIS STAGE. ROVIRA SAID THIS WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL AS THE GOS WANTED TO MOVE ON THIS QUESTION IN CLOSE STEP WITH US. ACTION REQUESTED: I SHOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO MAKE ON THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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POINT TO PASS ON TO ROVIRA.

6. ROVIRA ALSO ALLUDED TO THE RECENT SPANISH CANCELLATION OF THE LETTER OF INTENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF 24 F-4'S. HE SAID THE REASON FOR THE CANCELLATION WAS STRICTLY A FINANCIAL ONE AND DID NOT BEAR ON THE NEGOTIATIONS.

7. COMMENT: IT IS MY IMPRESSION THAT THE GOS IS QUITE WILLING TO HAVE THE NEGOTIATIONS MOVE FORWARD ON A SLOW TEMPO. I THINK THE REASON FOR THIS IS TWO-FOLD. THE FIRST IS THE FULL AWARENESS BY THE GOS THAT THE FORMULATION OF SOME NATO LINK WILL NOT BE AN EASY MATTER AND WILL TAKE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME BEYOND THE PERIOD OF THE VALIDITY OF THE PRESENT AGREEMENT. THE SECOND REASON, ALTHOUGH THIS IS NOT CLEARLY STATED, IS THE BELIEF THAT IN-

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TERNAL DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE NEXT MONTHS MAY OPEN UP NEW
POSSIBILITIES FOR CLOSER SPANISH RELATIONS WITH EUROPE
AND NATO. THIS VIEW COULD BE RELATED EITHER TO FRANCO'S
DISAPPEARANCE FROM THE SCENE OR TO THEIR BELIEF THAT THE
POLITICAL EVOLUTION IN SPAIN, INVOLVING THE NEW POLITICAL
ASSOCIATIONS, MAY MAKE SPAIN MORE POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE
TO THE OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PFOR SP US, CONFIDENTIAL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE093817
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EUR/WE:REBARBOUR:VE
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750413/aaaaambi.tel
Line Count: 178
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <17 SEP 2003 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US-SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS--CONVERSATION WITH
TAGS: n/a
To: ROME BRUSSELS THE HAGUE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006